

REMARKS:

New Claims 23 and 24 are hereby added. Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1-16, and 21-24 will be pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, and 21-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,135,486 to G.S. Wing ("*Wing*"). Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing*. Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,976,396 to Carlson et al. ("*Carlson*").

Claim 1 has been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention.

The Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments add no new matter to the application.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b):

Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by G.S. Wing (*Wing*). However, since *Wing* fails to disclose all of the limitations of claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22 as discussed below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is an independent claim, and Claims 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22 depend, directly or indirectly, from Claim 1. Accordingly, the following remarks made in connection with Claim 1 apply equally to Claims 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22.

Wing discloses a wing skin in which the leading edge portion is integral to the primary wing skin. In the case of *Wing*, the leading edge portion of the skin is simply the portion of the wing skin that is first to engage the airstream during forward flight. The airfoil skin attaches to leading edge formers as well as trailing edge formers, indicating that the skin covers more than just the leading edge portion (*Wing*, Col. 2, lines 1-4, Fig. 6 and Fig. 7). If a foreign object, such as a bird, were to strike the leading edge portion of the wing skin in *Wing*, the damage would likely require extensive repairs and/or replacement of the entire wing skin, or the entire wing itself. This is largely due to the fact

that the wing skin covers the entire wing, and that the wing skin in a continuous single part without anyway of attenuating energy from an impact from an object during flight.

In contrast, Claim 1, as presently amended, includes solely the leading edge member, which is a separate and distinct physical member from the substructure behind the leading edge member. This allows the leading edge member to be configured to deform on impact, thereby minimizing damage to the substructure of the aircraft. An example of such substructure would be: remaining airfoil skin portions, a trailing edge, and internal structural components such as spars and ribs. In contrast, the leading edge portion of the skin in *Wing* is integral to the entire wing skin and is not configured to protect substructure from a collision with an object. *Wing* discloses a configuration that provides a direct load path from leading edge portion of the skin to the substructure, which is at least partially what the leading edge member of Claim 1 seeks to avoid. In summary, the leading edge member of Claim 1 is a separate and distinct member, whereas the leading edge portion of the wing skin in *Wing* is integrated into the entire wing skin. In addition, the leading edge member of Claim 1 is configured to deform on impact, thereby protecting the substructure by absorbing impact energy from a collision with an object. For at least these reasons, the Applicants submit that Claim 1, as amended, is not anticipated by *Wing*.

Accordingly, since *Wing* fails to disclose all of the limitations of Claim 1, *Wing* cannot anticipate Claim 1, or Claims 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22, which depend from Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be reconsidered and withdrawn. The Applicants respectfully request that Claims 1, 2, 5-10, 12-16, 21, and 22 be allowed.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing*. Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing* in view of *Carlson*. These rejections are respectfully traversed as discussed below.

Claim 11

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing*. The Office Action states that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to create different pockets on opposing sides of the protective skin.

Claim 11 is indirectly dependent upon Claim 1. The Applicants reiterate here the distinguishing remarks set forth above with regard to Claim 1. At least because *Wing* fails to disclose the features of Claim 1, *Wing* cannot render obvious Claim 11, which is indirectly dependent upon Claim 1.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing* be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 4

Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing* in view of *Carlson*. However, since the proposed combination of *Wing* and *Carlson* fails to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of Claim 1, the proposed combination of *Wing* and *Carlson* cannot render Claims 3 and 4 obvious.

Claims 3 and 4 depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, the remarks above in connection with Claim 1 apply equally to Claims 3 and 4. That is, *Wing* cannot anticipate or render obvious Claims 3 and 4. *Carlson* fails to cure this deficiency of *Wing*. *Carlson*, like *Wing*, at least fails to disclose a leading edge member configured to protect the substructure by absorbing impact energy from a collision, as disclosed in Claim 1, and therefore also fails to disclose the more specific limitations recited in Claims 3 and 4. Thus, *Wing* and *Carlson*, whether considered separately or in combination as proposed by the Office Action, fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of Claims 3 and 4. Since Claims 3 and 4 depend from Claim 1, *Wing* and *Carlson*, whether considered separately or in combination as proposed by the Office Action, likewise fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of Claims 3 and 4.

In light of the remarks above, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over *Wing* in view of *Carlson* be reconsidered and withdrawn.

NEW CLAIMS:

New Claims 23 and 24 have been added in order to provide for a more adequate basis for protection of the invention. Claims 23 and 24 depend from independent Claim 1. Accordingly, the arguments presented above in connection with Claim 1 apply equally to Claims 23 and 24. Since Claim 1 is considered to be in condition for allowance for at least reasons presented above, Claims 23 and 24 are likewise considered to be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION:

The Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments and remarks *prima facie* place the subject application in condition for allowance. As such, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance.

This Amendment After Final is being filed via the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's EFS-Web electronic filing system. No fees are deemed to be necessary; however, the undersigned hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayments, to **Deposit Account No. 502806**.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

/Brian E. Harris 48,383/
James E. Walton, Reg. No. 47,245
Brian E. Harris, Reg. No. 48,383
Law Offices of James E. Walton, P.L.L.C.
1169 N. Burleson Blvd., Suite 107-328
Burleson, Texas 76028
(817) 447-9955 (Voice)
(817) 447-9954 (Facsimile)
jim@waltonpllc.com

CUSTOMER NO. 38441

ATTORNEY AND AGENT FOR APPLICANTS